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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Georgia Medicaid Selected for Long Term Care Partnership Project**

**ATLANTA** – The Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc. selected the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) to participate in their Long Term Care Partnership Expansion project. The program awards a \$50,000 grant to 10 states and aids their efforts to developing affordable long-term care insurance programs for their Medicaid population.

"This is a win-win for both the state of Georgia and health consumers," said Dr. Rhonda Medows, DCH Commissioner. "It allows us to offer coverage and financial protection for beneficiaries, and help reduce Medicaid expenditures."

The Long Term Care Partnership Expansion project, which is currently operational in four states, will offer Georgia with extensive technical assistance to develop their long-term care partnership programs.

"This program will empower consumers to take responsibility for organizing and financing their long-term care," said Medows. "While no one wants to think about when they or their loved one may need long-term care in an assisted living facility, a nursing home, or at home care, it is important to place powerful options in the hands of consumers."

Georgia's long term care partnership program, which was established in April 2006, targets consumers who might not usually purchase long-term care insurance and those who are most at risk of future reliance on Medicaid to cover their long-term care needs.

"As the population ages, it is important for Georgians to plan for their future long-term care needs now," said Bonnie Hurd, Program Director of the Georgia long term care partnership program. "By investing in long-term care insurance to protect them and their families, Georgians can prepare for future needs and maintain control of their family's finances well into the future."

Individuals that purchase qualified long-term care insurance are able to exhaust their benefits and have a portion of their resources disregarded when determining their eligibility for Medicaid. Medicaid will also disregard a like amount from estate recovery obligations.

Georgia's Medicaid program currently funds long-term care costs for approximately 85,000 individuals. Long-term care services may include the medical, social, housekeeping, or rehabilitation services a person needs over months or years in order to improve or maintain his or her health and a level of personal independence. Such services are provided not only in nursing homes, but also in people's residential homes or apartments, as well as assisted living facilities.

For more information on the Georgia long term care partnership program, please call 404-463-8565.

**About the Department of Community Health**

The Georgia Department of Community Health champions:

ACCESS to affordable, quality health care in our communities

RESPONSIBLE health planning and use of health care resources

HEALTHY behaviors and improved health outcomes

Equal Opportunity Employer